DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 270 407 SP 027 618

AUTHOR Williams, Audrey Y.
TITLE A Profile of Black Female Administrators at a Large Urban Public University.
PUB DATE Apr 86
NOTE 21p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (70th, San Francisco, CA, April 16-20, 1986).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Attitudes; *Administrator Characteristics; Administrator Qualifications; Administrator Role; *Blacks; *College Administration; *Females; Higher Education; Job Satisfaction; Work Experience

ABSTRACT

Data are presented from a survey of black female college administrators conducted in the 1984-85 academic year at the City University of New York. Fifty-four women with the titles of vice-chancellor, college president, vice-president, dean, director, department chair, and assistant or associate to those titles, responded to the survey. Information was collected on: (1) age and family background; (2) educational background and salary; (3) work history; (4) work status; (5) current administrative title; (6) range of authority; (7) number of people supervised; (8) salary funding source; (9) percentage of time devoted to administration; (10) line or staff administrators; and (11) budget authority. The subjects were also asked how they found out about their current position. Administrative perceptions were identified through questions dealing with: pay equity; obvious path to higher level positions; the reason they were selected for their current position; their perceptions of the acceptance of their position; and feelings about being part of the central administrative team. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED270407

A Profile of Black Female Administrators At A Large Urban Public University

About the Author

Audrey Y. Williams
Associate Professor and Assistant to the Dean
of the School of Education at Baruch College-C.U.N.Y.
This research was made possible by a grant from the
C.U.N.Y.-Professional Staff Congress.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

A. Williams

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

Abstract

During the 1984-85 academic year the author identified 98 black women who were working at C.U.N.Y. in the titles of vice chancellor, provost, dean, department chair, director and the assistants or associates to the aforementioned titles. Fifty-four (56%) responded to a questionnaire that gave family history, salary, work experience, rank, and administrative perceptions of themselves.

This is a significant contribution to the scant literature about black female college administrators. The data yields evidence of a rich pool of young talented women who have much to offer academe.

SP 027618

A Profile of Black Female Administrators At A Large Urban Public University

Presented at
April, 1986
A.E.R.A. Conference
by
Dr. Audrey Williams

A college or university thrives on the coordinated efforts of faculty, students, staff and administrators. Administrators have traditionally brought to mind the images of a white male who is part of the white male policy making team of an institution. In 1981, the Leaders In Transition project directed by Kathryn Moore verified the image. Almost 3,000 administrators representing fifty-five positions were surveyed at 1,400 four-year institutions. Moore constructed a profile of the 2,896 administrators who responded and found ..."an overwhelming 91.8 per cent were white, 5.4 per cent were black, and 2.8 per cent represented other racial or ethnic groups. For purposes of analysis, respondents in the 'other' category were grouped with blacks to form a category called minority." (Moore, Kathryn, 1981). Moore's report provides limited specific data about blacks because of the grouping.

There is a growing awareness that the image of a college administrator need not be limited to whites or males. A recent report from the Office of Women in Higher Education from the American Council on Education shows that there has been a 72% increase in the number of women chief executive officers in private and public two- and four-year colleges. The ACE report states that CEO's in this country are in many ways: "similar to their male counterparts. They are found in all types of institutions, e.g. public and private, large and small, urban and rural, four-year and two-year, coed and single sex. They are also found in all geographical regions, although unlike men they are not in all fifty states. Black, Asian Pacific, Hispanics and Native American women are not equally represented although their numbers are growing." (Comment, May 1984, p. 3). Of the 254 female CEO's identified in 1983 thirteen were black. The small numbers of black CEO's is a reflection of the history of black women in higher education, particularly at predominantly white institutions. (Stafford, Walter 1982, Williams, Audrey 1983).

The literature on sexism in the corporate and university world is quite extensive (Ahern, Nancy 1981, Balwin, Stephen 1979, Baron, Alma 1979, Caplow, Theodore and McGee, Reese J. 1965, Evans, Van M. 1975, Farley, Jennie 1982, Foster, Mary Sue 1981, Harris, Ann Sutherland 1970). Women as a group are discussed but the singular experiences and consequences of discrimination and the attempts at redress do not address black women who as a group and as individuals routinely have to hurdle double barriers of gender and race.

In 1975, Myrtis Mosley requested the names of the black female administrators from 125 senior officials that participated in the Harvard Summer Institute of Educational Management. In her report based upon a 51% response from 232 people she concluded that black female college administrators are an "endangered species" whose numbers are decreasing. Mosley found that the people in her study tended to have positions that were outside of the main structure of the university, were underpaid and overworked, and received little or no support from their peers, black or white.

Mosley's study defined the need for additional research on black female college administrators. In an effort to add a significant contribution to the paucity of literature about black female college administrators, during the 1984-85 academic year I conducted a survey of the black female administrators at the City University of New York (CUNY). I identified women who worked in the titles of vice-chancellor, college president, vice-president, dean, director, department chair, and assistant or associate to the aforementioned titles.

Method

A total of ninety-eight black women college administrators were identified as working in the selected titles. A questionnaire was sent with a letter of explanation to all ninety-eight women and fifty-four (56%) were completed and returned.

The questionnaire contained questions that focused on the age of the respondents, family history, educational background, administrative profile, range of authority, future goals and aspirations and mentors.

Age and Family Background

A total of forty-two (78%) of the respondents are between the ages of 30-49 years, which means they are a resource group to be tapped when an effort is made to meet affirmative action recommendations. (See Table 1) This age cohort represents a group that can be used for pilot projects to train, upgrade, and select high level college or university administrators.

The respondents are almost evenly divided in numbers between those who have children and those who are childless. There were thirty (55.5%) who have one or more children and twenty-three (42.6%) are childless (Table 2). The largest cohort, twenty-seven (50.9%) of the respondents are married compared to twelve (22.6%) who are single, eight (15.1%) divorced, four widowed (7.5%) and two (3.8%) who are separated. (See Table 3)

The respondents represent a group of black women whose parents had an above average, as a group, level of education, for both parents of the respondents in about seventy percent of the sample had a high school education or better which was not the average for black people forty or more years ago. (See Table 4)

Educational Background and Salary

The respondents who are married and who answered the item about their spouse's education indicated that the majority, twenty-six (76%) were married to men with a bachelor's degree or higher.

The respondents had a range of educational credentials. The largest cohort, twenty-two (41.5%) have a master's degree, the next largest group of nineteen (35.2%) have a terminal degree and the remaining twelve (22.2%) have bachelor degrees. (See Table 5) Thirty-six (66%) of the women received their undergraduate degrees from historically white colleges. Education and the social sciences were the major areas of study for the largest cohorts, twenty-four (44%) and twelve (22%).

The respondent's salaries ranged from $20,000-$50,000 and above. The majority of thirty-three (62.3%) earn between $30,000 and $49,000.

Administrative Profile

Work History

The sample group reflects the recent entry of black women into CUNY central administration. Only seven (13%) of the women in the sample had previously chaired an academic department or held an administrative assignment in student affairs, library services, SEEK or College Discovery. Twenty-four (44%) have been in their current position for two to four years, the next largest group seventeen (31%) was in the current position for less than a year, and thirteen (24%) have been in their current assignment for five or more years.

When asked if their current job existed before they took their assignment, a majority of forty-two (77%) answered affirmatively. The purpose of that question was to determine whether these administrators were truly part of the traditional college central administration or were they window dressing. There was a question about the sex and ethnicity of the person who previously held the respondent's job. The largest cohort nineteen (35%) replaced people other than minority males or minority females. Only seven (13%) replaced a minority male, while sixteen replaced a minority female.

Work status

In academe faculty rank and status are prerequisites for the top level positions of chancellor and college president. None of the women in the sample were college presidents or chancellor. Twenty-one (38%) have tenure in an academic department which means a certain level of job security. If for some reason a tenured faculty member who is a full-time administrator chooses to leave the administrative assignment she has the right to request a teaching assignment.

Ten (18%) have multiple reappointments and fifteen (27%) have some other kind of appointment. Neither of those groups have faculty rank.

Of those with faculty rank fourteen (25%) are full professors, five (9%) are associate professors, six (11%) are assistant professors, and four (7%) are lecturers. There are twenty-one (38%) who are in the higher education officer series, fifteen (27%) are higher education associates and six (11%) are higher education assistants. (See Table 6)

Current Administrative Title

There was a check list of standard CUNY administrative titles along with a category called "other". The largest cohort sixteen (29%) was directors, closely followed by thirteen (24%) who identified themselves as being in titles other than the ones listed. Eight (14%) of the survey participants are department chairs, two (3%) are deans, one (1%) is a vice-president, one (1%) is a vice-chancellor, and two are special assistants.

Range of Authority

The range of authority was derived from questions about the number of people supervised, salary funding source, percentage of time devoted to administration and budget authority.

Number of People Supervised

All of the respondents, with the exception of seven (12.(%) have two or more people reporting directly to them. Twenty (37%) of the sample have ten or more people reporting directly to them. (See Table 7)

Salary Funding Source

The funding source gives an indication of an institution's commitment to having someone in the specific title on a permanent basis. Outside and/or supplementary funding from sources other than the regular college budget suggest that an individual may be paid by a higher or lower salary than the regular college scale will allow.

Percentage of Time Devoted to Administration

A little more than half of the sample, twenty-eight (51.8%) are full time administrators. The next largest cohort, fifteen (27.9%) devote seventy-five percent of their time to administration, four (7.4%) do administrative work as half of their work assignment and the remaining seven (12.(%) are administrators twenty-five percent or less of the time.

Line or Staff Administrators

Thirty one (57.4%) described themselves as line administrators and twelve (22.2%) as staff, while eleven did not answer the question. Eighteen (33.3%) of the sample held a previous administrative position, sixteen (29.6%) held two, ten (18,5%) held three or more and ten (18.5%) are in their first administrative assignment.

Budget Authority

Thirty five (64.8%) of the sample have a budget to sign off on and to administer. The remaining nineteen (35.2%) do not. Seventeen (31.5%) have to have the approval of one person for their budget decisions, seven (12.9%) do not have to have additional approval for their budget decisions.

How The Sample Found Out About Their Current Position

The group does not suggest from their experience that there is any one way traditionally used by black female college administrators in securing a job. The largest cohort, fourteen (25.9%) was recommended by a former supervisor. The next group of thirteen (24%) was contacted by their current supervisor, eight (14.8%) responded to newspaper ads and were selected for their current positions. Eleven (20.3%) used means not listed on the questionnaire to get their assignments. (See Table 8)

Adminstrative Perceptions

Several questions including one about pay equity, obvious path to higher level positions, the reason the sample respondents thought they were selected for their current position, their perceptions of the acceptance of their decisions, and feelings about being part of the central administrative team were used to describe their administrative perceptions.

Equal Pay

The question of equal pay gets to the heart of a problem that CUNY and many other established major universities in the nation share; salary equity. The question of salary equity for male and female faculty was resolved legally for CUNY faculty who have worked at the university for the past decade. A class action suit against CUNY determined that historically women faculty at CUNY have been paid less than men with comparable credentials, work experience, and college assignments. In administration the subtleties of salary differences may be harder to discern because deans or directors may receive privileges that are difficult to calculate such as exclusive use of a college car or released time to do consulting. The unknown perks make the question of equal pay a difficult one. Seventeen (31.5%) of the respondents answered affirmatively, while eight (33.3%) said "no" and eighteen (33.3%) were unsure.

Obvious Path to Higher Level

People who are making long range career plans should have an idea of what route is the most efficient and effective for reaching their career goal. The sample group did not express certainty about the path to a higher level assignment. Twenty-one (38.8%) were not sure, and twenty (37%) said there was no obvious path to a high level assignment. Thirteen (24%) said there is an obvious path. Perhaps because black women are so new to the system the routes to higher level assignments are still a mystery.

Reason Selected For Current Position

Twenty (37%) of the women in the sample said they were chosen for their current administrative assignment because of their previous work experience. Eighteen (33.3%) did not answer the question suggesting some degree of uncertainty about why they were chosen for their current jobs. Seven (12.1%) said they were chosen because of their academic credentials. Only two (3.7%) said previous job title was the reason for their current job. Networking and ethnicity were each selected by only one person as reason for the current assignment. The remainder did not answer the question. (See Table 9)

Percentage of Decisions Rejected

The women in the sample perceived that most of the time their decisions are accepted by their supervisors. Thirty-six (66%) said their decisions are rejected 0-5% of the time which is a high percentage of agreement. Nine (16.6%) said their decisions were rejected 6-10% of the time also a fairly high percentage of agreement.

Recognition For Ideas

There were mixed responses to the question of whether or not the sample administrators received recognition for their ideas. Twenty-four (44.4%) said they received "some" recognition, fifteen (27.7%) said they received a "great deal" of recognition, nine (16.6%) "were not sure" and only six (11%) said they got no recognition for their ideas. When an administrator feels that her work is adequately acknowledged she feels as if she is part of the central administration; uncertainty about recognition can be a reflection of the institution and/or job insecurity. Those who felt they got some or a great deal of recognition perceive themselves as being on the administration team. Self-perception can sometimes affect the job that is done. A person who feels that good efforts are not acknowledged may not work as diligently on subsequent assignments, or may begin to be perceived and treated differently by her administrative peers.

The sample also gave varied responses about exclusion from the information and support network. The exclusion perception may or may not be valid and if valid the reasons may be attributed to race or gender. Twenty-three (42.5%) felt somewhat excluded from the information and support network while twelve (22.2%) were not sure, nine (16.6%) felt no exclusion, eight (14.8%) felt a great deal of exclusion. The support network and feeling part of the administrative team is important for an individual's success, since the feeling of team involvement centers around the concept of trust. If there is a feeling that decisions will be made from established criteria and that the rules will not be changed in mid-stream an administrator can concentrate on the task at hand rather than trying to figure out what are the new criteria.

A majority of thirty-seven (68%) of the sample felt that a black female administrator must work twice as hard as her male counterpart, fourteen (25%) said they must work equally as hard, and only one (1%) person said that she did not know.

Confidence In Reaching Fifth Year Goal

The question about reaching a fifth year goal was a difficult one; nineteen (35%) of the sample did not answer. Fifteen (27%) were only "somewhat confident" that they will reach their fifth year goal. The uncertainty and doubt that prevade the sample for this question could be a reflection of what they view the system to be, it may be some self-doubt surfacing, or it may be a modest and safe answer. (See Table 10)

Mentor

The word mentor has become popular with the rise of contemporary feminism. Black females in college administration in a large urban institution such as CUNY are relatively new. The question as to whether they have mentors probably has something to do with their ambivalence about their future.

Thirty-three (61%) of the respondents said they have no mentor. Twenty (37%) said they do while only one (1.9%) did not answer the question. Nine (16.6%) people said their mentor worked at the same institution. The sex or ethnicity of the mentor varied. Three people (5.5%) said their mentor is a black female. Three others said their mentor is an older black woman, the others identified black men, white men, and white women as their mentors. The sample data seem to suggest that for this group of administrators race or gender was not the determining factor for selecting someone to help devise strategies for job success. (See Table 11)

Professional Affiliations

Faculty are encouraged to actively participate in professional organizations which provide opportunities for professional growth and networking. Twelve of the respondents (22.2%) are active in two professional organizations, eleven (20.3%) are active in three, nine (16.6%) are not active in any professional organization. The remaining fourteen (25.9%) are active in four or more professional organizations. Although the majority of forty-five belong to at least one professional organization, as a group, very few of the CUNY black female administrators hold offices in professional organizations. Thirty (55.5) indicated that they held no office. The accomplishments of administrators and/or faculty who are executive officers in professional organizations add to the prestige of the individual and her college.

Publication Record

As a group most of the sample consists of women who are administrators on twelve-month assignments, with little time for publishing. Two (3.7%) of the sample have written three books, four (7.4%) have written one book, the remaining forty-eight (88.8%) have not written a book. Four (7.4%) have written one journal article, five (9.3%) have written two articles and the remainder of the group has written from three to fifteen professional journal articles.

Conclusions

The fifty-four women in the survey who represented fifty-six percent of the black women college administrators in selected titles at a large urban university create a profile of a young woman in her late thirties or early forties who was educated in an historically white higher education institution and is as likely to be married as not, with at least one child. She is the product of parents who had a high degree of education for their generation. She is part of the regular college administration, has faculty rank and status, and sees herself as often being part of the institution's administrative team. Race and/or gender are not significant for the group's mentors. She has published despite the fact that she is on a twelve-month administrative assignment. She is a natural resource for university efforts to implement affirmative action and to identify women in non-traditional roles at the university.

The survey presents the need for further study to see what career patterns and how high these women rise in university or college administration. It is also necessary to look at them individually perhaps with personal interviews to see how and if they can serve as mentors for other young women. These women should play a key role in helping to set educational policy that will affect all CUNY students. Since enrollments for black students in graduate programs has declined this group and others like them will have to be approached for assistance in launching educational reforms.

Table #1

AGE OF RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Under 25 years	1	1.9
30 - 39 years	21	38.9
40 - 49 years	21	38.9
50 and over	10	18.5
No Response	1	1.9
TOTAL	54	100

Table #2

NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER RESPONDENT

	Number	Percentage
None	23	42.6
One	10	18.5
Two	11	20.4
Three	8	14.1
Four	1	1.9
No Response	1	1.9
TOTAL	54	100

Table #3

MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Single	12	22.2
Married	27	50.0
Divorced	8	14.8
Widowed	4	7.4
Separated	2	3.7
No Response	1	1.9
TOTAL	54	100

Table #4

PARENTS' EDUCATION

	Fathers		Mothers	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Grade School (1 - 8)	13	24.1	12	22.2
High School (9 - 12)	20	37.0	24	44.4
2 Years College	4	7.4	7	12.9
Bachelor's Degree	6	11.1	3	5.5
Master's Degree	3	5.5	7	12.9
Doctorate or Professional Degree	6	11.1	0	0
No Response	2	3.7	1	1.1
TOTAL	54	100	54	100

Table #5

RESPONDENTS' HIGHEST DEGREE

	Number	Percentage
BA, BS, or BBA	12	22.2
MS, MA, or MBA	23	42.6
Ed.D.	10	18.5
Ph.D.	9	16.7
TOTAL	54	100

Table #6

ACADEMIC RANK OF RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Professor	14	25.9
Associate Professor	5	9.2
Assistant Professor	6	11.1
Lecturer	4	7.4
Higher Associate Education Officer	15	27.8
Higher Assistant Education Officer	6	11.1
Other	4	7.4
TOTAL	54	100

Table #7

NUMBER OF PEOPLE DIRECTLY SUPERVISED
BY THE RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
None	7	12.9
2 - 4	12	22.2
5 - 7	11	20.4
8 - 10	4	7.4
More than 10	20	37.0
TOTAL	54	100

Table #8

WAYS RESPONDENTS FOUND OUT ABOUT THEIR CURRENT POSITION

	Number	Percentage
Newspaper Ad	8	14.8
University Personnel Office Ad	1	1.9
Contacted by Current Supervisor	13	24.1
Recommended by a Former Supervisor	14	25.9
Recommended by a Friend	3	5.5
Created Own Position	3	5.5
Other	11	20.4
No Response	1	1.9
TOTAL	54	100

Table #9

REASON SELECTED FOR CURRENT POSITION

	Number	Percentage
Previous Job Title	3	5.5
Academic Credentials	7	12.9
Experience in the Institution	20	37.0
Previous Higher Education Experience	3	5.5
Networking	1	1.9
Ethnicity	2	3.7
No Response	18	33.3
TOTAL	54	100

Table #10

CONFIDENCE IN REACHING FIFTH YEAR GOALS

	Number	Percentage
Extremely Confident	11	20.3
Somewhat Uncertain	3	5.5
Neutral	2	3.7
Somewhat Confident	15	27.8
Extremely Doubtful	2	3.7
Not Certain	2	3.7
No Response	19	35.2
TOTAL	54	100

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ahern, Nancy C. and Scott, Elizabeth L. Career Outcomes in a Matched Sample of Men and Women, Ph.Ds: An Analytical Report (Washington, D.C.: Committee on the Education and Employment of Women in Science and Engineering, Commission on Human Resources, National Research Council, National Academy Press, 1981).

Balwin, Stephen E. " 'Subconscious' Sex Bias and Labor Market Reality." Labor Law Journal, 30, 7 (July 1979): pp. 439-40.

Baron, Alma S. "Women in Management: A New Look." The Personnel Administrator, Vol. 23 (December 1978), pp. 52-54.

Caplow, Theodore and McGee, Reese J. The Academic Marketplace. New York; Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1965.

Evans, Van M. "Unisex Jobs and Non-Traditional Employment." Personnel, Vol. 52 (November-December 1975), pp. 31-37.

Foster, Mary Sue. "Moving Women Into 'Male' Jobs." Supervisory Management, Vol. 26 (June 1981), pp. 2-9.

Farley, Jennie. Academic Women and Employment Discrimination: A Critical Annotated Bibliography, Cornell University ILR Publications, 1982.

Harris, Ann Sutherland. "The Second Sex in Academe." AAUP Bulletin 56, 3 (Fall 1970), pp. 233-95.

Moore, Kathryn M. "Careers in College and University Administration: How Are Women Affected?" New Directions in Higher Education No.45: 5-15, 1984.

Mosley, Myrtis Hall. "Black Women Administrators in Higher Education: An Endangered Species." Journal of Black Studies, Vol. 10, No. 3 (March 1980), pp. 295-310.

Stafford, Walter. Tri-State Minority Employment Opportunity Project Final Project, Ford Foundation (Grant Nos. 790-0339 and 815-0215), 1980.

Williams, Audrey. "Tenure and Promotion in the Tri-State Area." Proceedings: First National Conference on Issues Facing Black Administrators at Predominantly White Colleges and Universities, 1982, pp. 158-164.